

FRESH PRODUCE STORAGE CONSIDERATIONS

(Factors Affecting Fresh Produce Shelf-Life At The Operator Level)

Rank The Following Factors In Order Of Importance To Produce Shelf-Life At The Restaurant/Foodservice Operation Level (1=most important, 6=least important).

_____ Ethylene Gas _____ Temperature _____ Humidity
 _____ Time _____ Handling _____ Modified Atmosphere Packages

TEMPERATURE	ETHYLENE	HUMIDITY
1. Keep products as close to proper temperature as possible. 2. Avoid <u>chill</u> damage of tomatoes, snap beans, avocados, bananas, cucumbers, squash, pineapples. 3. Utilize temperature variation throughout your cold box. 4. Avoid freeze damage of all fresh produce items. 5. Serve fresh fruit at room temp. for better flavor/taste.	1. Reduce effects of ethylene: a. Watch ethylene producers slotting/mixing in cold box b. Cold temperatures c. Good air movement d. Ethylene absorbants/filters 2. Primary ethylene producers: apples, avocados, bananas, melons, tomatoes, peaches, pears, passion fruit, papayas. 3. Ethylene sensitive products: Iceberg & European lettuces, broccoli, carrots, cucumbers, parsley, leafy greens.	1. Keep cold box cold to reduce water loss associated with humidity. 2. Use paper covers to reduce moisture loss when appropriate. 3. Be careful with tupperware containers that are completely sealed because they may increase humidity & ethylene. 4. Add a little crushed ice to products such as bulk broccoli and green onions in very hot summer months.

TIME	HANDLING	MODIFIED ATMOSPHERE PACKS
1. Time includes transit time to your operation for products held at improper temperatures. 2. Develop menu schedules that use higher respiration rate products, that are more perishable, closer to delivery dates. 3. First in - first out rotation is good 90% of the time - <u>check quality</u> . 4. Minimize time products are left out of refrig. after prepping.	1. Move product into appropriate cold box slot ASAP on delivery. 2. Keep all products off of floor for sanitation & good cold air flow all the way around the product. 3. Keep products in their shipping carton whenever possible. 4. Don't drop products, even potatoes will bruise easily. 5. Be careful not to stack heavy products on others.	1. <u>Must</u> keep pre-cut products at appropriate temperature range. 2. Do not take pre-cut bags out of boxes and store on shelves. 3. Re-washing or rinsing pre-cut product is optional. Most products are ready to eat. <u>Check the carton/bag label.</u> 4. Most pre-cut products are 100% natural, no preservatives or additives are used. Check the carton/bag labels.